

May 1-12

Interim Council of Faculty of Fine Arts

Minutes - May 9, 1975

PRESENT: Dean A. Pinsky (Chairman); Professors D. Andrus, F. Barry, P. Cohen, G. Chalmers, E.F. Cooke, M. Dewes, J. Goguen, G. Gross, H. George, R. Greenberg, D. Jones, J. Kelly, C. Lacki, P. Landsley, J. Locke, S. Paikowsky, L. Sherman, J. Smoke, P. Spensley, N. Springford, B. Wainwright
Registrar: Mr. K. Adams
Librarian's Rep: Mr. Michael Hood
Student Reps: Mr. Ian Howard

- * 1. The Interim Council was called to order at 9:40 a.m. It was moved by Prof. Smoke and seconded by Prof. Sherman, that for the summer, the number for a quorum would be reduced to ten and that this would include the months of June, July and August.

Motion CARRIED

The minutes of the meeting of April 11th were approved.

2. Chairman's Remarks

Professor Pinsky announced that the Government would probably not be adopting the new financing formula nor the new space norms. Until he had received more specific information there was very little more he could say, other than this obviously implied smaller gains for the Faculty in terms of space and financing than originally hoped. He noted that once again the historic method would be used in calculating for budget and space.

The Chairman noted that at the last meeting of Senate discussion on the para-academic proposal was withdrawn by the author for further study. The document on para-academic credits would therefore be tabled until further notice.

3. Proposed New Marking System
(FAFC 7475-4-D2)

Mr. Ken Adams announced that item (b) Part II "Interim Proposal for Spring and Fall Convocation 1975" on Page Nine of the document had been approved by Senate. This was the only part of the document that had been approved.

Mr. Adams went on to explain the purpose of the document prepared by his Committee was to try and incorporate both aspects of the grading system found on both campuses and also establish a suitable numerical evaluation of the letter grades presently used on the Sir George Williams campus. He explained that instructors would have the opportunity to use either the letter or numerical grade, however, the letter grade system would be computed to the percentages which appear on Page two of the document.

Professor Andrus wanted to know whether the letter grade system would include the plus and minus.

Mr. Adams replied that it would be as it appeared on Page one of the document.

Professor Cohen asked if the instructor had a choice as to whether to use a letter or numerical figure.

Mr. Adams explained that the instructor could submit his grades within the stated classifications that were listed in the document.

Professor Cohen wanted to know what kind of system was presently used at McGill University.

Mr. Adams explained that, basically, other institutions were trying to find out what an "A" represented, since there was no relationship between the letter and numerical value.

Professor Cohen mentioned that there had been a tendency in other institutions to move away from such a system.

Mr. Adams said that the purpose of his committee was to unify the letter grades between the two campuses.

Professor Gross wished to know whether it was possible for a Faculty to use any grades it wished and whether this would contravene any regulations within the Document.

Mr. Adams indicated that the Computer would record the letter grade and its equivalent would be kept in the Records office for reference. He explained that it was up to Faculty Council

to submit to Senate any recommendations it wished and explained that a recommendation should come back to his Committee in this regard.

Professor Sherman noted that it was possible to make some recommendations, however, you could not discuss grading systems without first discussing the evaluation process and that this was an area that had never been dealt with in the Department of Fine Arts. The different areas within the Faculty, i.e. studio as opposed to Art History would have different reactions to this problem. The studio areas may not agree with the numerical values in the Document.

Professor Pinsky explained that the purpose of the present discussion was to come up with a recommendation regarding the Document, so that Ken Adams and his committee could report to Senate the reactions of the Faculty of Fine Arts. It was up to someone on the Council to make a recommendation as to how best to proceed.

Professor Paikowsky asked when the system would become operative?

Mr. Adams explained that it was his intention to try and put the document before Senate by September so that the technical problems could be taken care of, however, he foresaw many academic problems that probably would prevent this.

Professor Pinsky wished it to be made clear that whatever system was adopted by the University as a whole it was there as a guide only. Instructors may use it if they wished, or, as has happened before in Fine Arts, some instructors wished to give everyone the same letter grade. He explained that everyone would have a different sense of what a grading system meant and that obviously each instructor would make their own distinctions as to how to mark their students. He felt it advisable, however, to come to some agreement or disagreement of the document as a Faculty.

Professor Cooke explained that the Faculty of Arts had also experienced difficulty voting on this document and that after two and a half hours of deliberation, finally recommended to keep the present system for the time being. Generally, it was felt that the numerical equivalents were too high and there was some dissatisfaction with the grade point averages.

Professor Sherman felt that some comment should be made on the mandate of Ken Adams' committee having to accommodate two grading systems without discussion on the meaning and purpose of grades. She felt that the grading system should have some relevance to a pedagogical system.

Ken Adams agreed that his Committee had a great deal of difficulty on the mandate itself.

Professor Gross thought that the Faculty should support a loose system and one that allowed various interpretations. He felt that the best solution would be to form a Committee in order to draw up a document to be submitted for the approval of the Fine Arts Faculty Council.

- * It was moved by Gerry Gross and seconded by Jerry Smoke to select various members of faculty to deliberate on this matter.

Professor Paikowsky expressed concern that there was not sufficient time to do such a job properly and wanted to know what other members of faculty felt about the Proposed new marking system.

Professor Sherman also felt that such a Committee would not have time to respond to the Document.

Professor Pinsky explained that, in fact, such a Committee would have until at least October before it had to come up with a solid recommendation and that the task at the moment was simply to respond that the present system should be used until an alternate system was found.

Mr. Adams agreed, and mentioned that responses from other Councils had been in the majority negative to various aspects of the document. However, he wished Council to indicate its specific objections to it.

Professor Pinsky therefore requested that, in the light of the discussion, the motion to strike a committee be withdrawn and a motion made that Ken Adams carry back to Senate the general sense of the discussions and inform Senate that Council wish to keep the present system for the moment.

Professor Gross and Jerry Smoke therefore withdrew the motion form a Committee.

Professor Landsley wanted to know what the objection was to the straight letter grade. Would we not continue to use this within this document?

Professor Pinsky explained that the numerical equivalents of the letters were too high and that the "B" presently used would be elevated from a grade of 77 to 85.

Professor Lacki mentioned that he wished to have a finer distinction or the opportunity to make a finer distinction between a C and a B and that basically he would not find it too difficult to accept the numerical values in the document.

Professor Cohen explained that in the discipline of Music the feeling was that at the lower levels grading could be left loose but that at higher levels it was more difficult to make a distinction. He wanted to know whether there had been many requests from graduate schools in Fine Arts for numerical distinctions.

Mr. Adams said that there had been only a very small number of such requests.

Professor Cohen felt that if other institutions had adopted broader classifications and allowed more play within each Faculty, that perhaps this kind of decentralization would be much more appropriate in particular to our discipline and Faculty.

Professor Kelly felt that the general consensus among the student body was that they wouldn't mind having the plus or minus and that perhaps faculty could also accept the plus and minus categories.

Professor Paikowsky explained that in Art History letter grades were given, however, according to the Document D had been given an absolute sense and that in a way the same could apply to the A. Personally, she would prefer not to have to work within an official numerical system.

Professor Smoke wanted to know what rationale was used in considering the scale from 49 to 100 and why the normal Bell shape curve had not been considered.

Mr. Adams explained that fifty was taken as the base because this was what had been used in the past at Loyola.

Professor Smoke asked how the differences between the letter grades had been arrived at.

Mr. Adams said that this system was based on a recommendation from the Arts Faculty Council.

Professor Gross questioned the function of a grading system. He felt that it was only important in that it acknowledged a convention i.e. the Quebec government High School Leaving, 80-100 is an A. Perhaps one of our objections should be that

this is not a coherent system and does not communicate to the student. Also, everyone agrees that the numerical equivalents are rather high. We might consider that they do not exist, but only in the records office. I would prefer to accept it and let other faculties have the satisfaction of the numerical equivalents. If we all use a standard equivalent for the letter grade and we don't have to use the plus or minus if we don't want to, then the only objection would be that the numerical equivalent has been placed too high.

Professor Greenberg would support a shaded grading system, and also agreed that the numerical equivalents were too high. Professor Greenberg wanted to know whether the Committee had considered using a percentile system.

Mr. Adams explained that this question had not been discussed but mentioned that percentiles were only relevant to a particular class at a particular time.

Professor Paikowsky wanted to know about the Sir George numerical system.

Mr. Adams explained that it was a five point system with a ten-point range for each letter.

Professor Smoke noted that conversion scales on the transcript are meaningless unless people know what the norms are, and it has been mentioned that the divisions are arbitrary.

Professor Locke noted that since Ken Adams need a response from Council that afternoon that perhaps motions should be offered and voted upon. Since there was a general consensus that the letter grading system with plus and minus would be feasibly received by Fine Arts Faculty,

- * it was moved by Professor Locke and seconded by Professor Sherman that specific recommendations should be made for Ken Adams to carry back to his Committee.

Motion CARRIED

- * It was moved by Professor Locke and seconded by Professor Sherman that there was a consensus that a letter grading system including the plus and minus would be favorably received by the Fine Arts Faculty Council.

Professor Springford noted that she would not recognize the A plus.

The motion CARRIED with the amendment that the A plus would not be recognized. 21 in Favour, 4 Opposed

Ken Adams noted that he would convey to his Committee that considerable debate had taken place within Fine Arts Faculty Council and that many questions still remained.

Professor Sherman response to the proposal was that it was arbitrary, illogical, inconsistent and needed to go back to square one for some analysis of specific methods, etc.

- * It was moved by Professor Locke and seconded by Prof. Smoke that at some time prior to the Senate discussion on the new proposed grading system that a Committee be formed of Fine Art faculty members, the Chairman of the Committee to be one of the Fine Arts Senators, with the membership of the Committee open to any member of Fine Arts wishing to attend.

Motion was DEFEATED with fifteen opposed and four in favour.

Professor Sherman noted that the Curriculum Committee was already in place and wondered whether there was any way that they could get something done.

Mr. Adams explained that for the moment he needed some feedback from Faculty Council on the proposal to take back to his Committee.

- * It was moved by Professor Smoke and seconded by Prof. Paikowsky that the document was based on an irrationale approach and that more thought needed to be given to an academic rationale and that Faculty Council should oppose it.

Motion CARRIED with two absentions; Prof. Gross and Prof. Cooke.

- * It was moved by Prof. Sherman and seconded by Prof. Smoke that a recommendation go to Senate requesting that before any new amendments were adopted that they be reviewed and commented on by Faculty Council.

Motion CARRIED

Ken Adams noted that, so far, this had been the only Council to come up with a recommendation to form a Committee in order to make specific recommendations on the document.

- * It was moved by Prof. Smoke and seconded by Prof. Cohen that a committee of eight be appointed by the Dean and representing each section, to study the grading system proposal and make its recommendations to the Senate Committee.

Motion CARRIED with twelve in favour and eight abstentions.

Professor Pinsky reiterated that it will be the work of this committee to insure that Ken Adams and his committee are made aware of the feelings present in the Fine Arts Faculty Council regarding the proposed new grading system.

4. Report on Graduation Arrangements

Professor Sherman announced that at Fine Arts Convocation an Honorary degree would be awarded to Franz-Paul Decker and that Prof. Cohen had agreed to make the presentation. She also mentioned that all faculty members would be receiving a letter with details, inviting them to convocation.

The question of academic dress had been discussed with Ken Adams since many members of faculty had not graduated from a University, however, he assured the committee that a gown would be available for everyone.

5. Other Business

Report of Curriculum Committee

ART HISTORY (FACC 75:2)

On behalf of the Arts Faculty, Dean Despland requested consideration for a BA art history honors degree to be offered by the Fine Arts Faculty.

After discussion of the request, the committee decided the following:

- a) With the new three-year programme, all programmes in fine arts would lead to a BFA degree, as approved by all sections in fine arts. In 1973, when the honors programme in art history was approved, there was never any question that the programme would lead to anything but a BFA degree.

b) The art history minor is completely open to arts faculty students.

c) Five art history courses are without prerequisites and Arts Faculty students have tertiary level priority at registration which places them ahead of fine arts students who want the course as an elective. In addition, all art history courses are available to Arts Faculty students provided they can meet the prerequisites.

d) The B.A. student in a double minor, one of which is art history, can take between 48 and 60 art history credits.

THEATRE ARTS

- * It was moved by Prof. Jerry Smoke and seconded by Prof. E.F. Cooke that during the deliberations on the Theatre Arts proposal, the Curriculum Committee had the chance to review the current programs on each campus. In light of the fact that Visual Arts and Music have commonly shared programs on each campus, I move that Council support in principle the organizing of one common program in Theatre Arts, between the Loyola and Sir George Williams campus when and as it may be possible in terms of curricular and resource implications.

Motion CARRIED

Faculty of Fine Arts: Structure

Professor Pinsky spoke at length on the academic and administrative structure proposed for the new Faculty of Fine Arts. He mentioned that a great deal of thought had been given to a proposal that would best serve the interests of everyone. In general, the recommendation for the new faculty is that it be divided into three parts or Divisions. A Performing Arts Divisions, which would include Drama, Theatre Arts and Music; a Visual Arts Division, including Cinema, Art Education and Art History; and a Graduate Studies Division.

After considerable discussion many specific questions arose regarding the proposed structure and it was decided to call a further meeting on Thursday, May 15th at 1 p.m. The only agenda item would be the Proposed new Structure for the Faculty of Fine Arts.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.